

Alaskan School Counseling: A Career Guidance and Exploration
Curriculum for Third through Sixth Grade Students

by

Sarah Bussa

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Susan Renes, Ph.D.
Allan Morotti, Ph.D.
Joni Simpson, M.Ed.

University of Alaska Fairbanks
Fairbanks, Alaska
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Abstract

This project reviews the existing literature on career development in children, and demonstrates the importance of school counselors facilitating career exploration and development with students of an elementary age. Although research suggests career development begins in childhood, and the American School Counselor Association and Alaska School Counselor Association require a career component to school counseling programs, few resources are available to elementary school counselors for developing an effective career curriculum. School counselors working with kindergarten through second grade students can reference *An Alaskan Career Education Curriculum for Grades Kindergarten to Second* (Zanazzo, 2014) for support in developing career lessons for younger elementary students. This project aims to provide Alaskan school counselors with a curricular resource to assist in the creation of a career curriculum that guides third through sixth grade students in career development.

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School counselors in the State of Alaska are expected to adhere to the national and state standards regarding comprehensive school counseling programs (Alaska School Counselor Association, 2007). A requirement of these standards is the implementation of career development and exploration focused guidance lessons and activities for students. While a variety of career program and curricular resources are available to school counselors working with secondary students, elementary school counselors are left with little to reference in constructing this program component. Additionally, school counselors in the State of Alaska are working with students in rural Alaska, and would benefit from culturally informed activities. Alaskan school counselors can be supported through the increased availability of career resources that meet the needs of both urban and rural students.

Description of Need

During childhood, the development of career identity begins. With guidance, students can begin to identify personal characteristics and skills and incorporate them into their career identity (Porfeli & Lee, 2012). The early development of career identity is particularly important because children of a younger elementary age tend to unknowingly limit career options based on gender stereotypes, exposure, or other factors (Auger, Blackhurst, & Wahl, 2005; Gottfredson, 1996; Porfeli, Hartung, & Vondracek, 2008; Wood & Kaszubowski, 2008). This restriction is concerning, as failing to recognize the options available constricts the ability to fully explore the possibilities for a future career (Gottfredson, 1996). It is important to explore exclusion of potential careers with students to assess whether this elimination is appropriate for the student (Auger et al., 2005).

Older elementary-aged students may need guidance and assistance exploring career due to aspirations of “fantasy” careers. These students have the tendency to focus on a future career that is unrealistic, again restricting the career options being explored and considered (Auger et al., 2005). A career component to a school counseling curriculum can provide students with well-rounded exposure to career, facilitating the thoughtful consideration of future career and development of career identity.

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) career standards have been integrated into both the Alaska School Counselor Framework standards and the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (FNSBSD) counseling curriculum for grades kindergarten through twelve (Alaska School Counselor Association, 2007; FNSBSD, 2009). To adhere to the expectations established by ASCA, the Alaska School Counseling Association, and FNSBSD, Alaskan elementary school counseling programs should be incorporating a solid career component to the curriculum. The national standards created by ASCA highlight the importance of career exploration and the development of career identity through a counseling curriculum. However, ASCA does not supplement these guidelines with lesson plans, examples, or other materials to guide school counselors in fulfilling the standards in their work with students. Research on career development and education during the elementary years is lacking (Howard & Walsh, 2010; Porfeli et al., 2008; Schultheiss, Palma, & Manzi, 2005; Watson & McMahon, 2005; Wood & Kaszubowski, 2008), further complicating the development of career-focused program components in accordance with ASCA’s standards.

There is a need to explore the development of a career counseling curriculum in Alaska. In 2007, the Alaska School Counselor Association produced the Alaska School Counseling Framework to guide Alaskan school counselors in the creation and implementation of a

comprehensive counseling program. Career is specifically mentioned as an important component within the association's mission statement; preparing students to enter the world of work after school, as well as developing knowledge and skills, are identified as major goals for the framework. In order to meet the goals established within the framework, the Alaska School Counselor Association identified the need for a programmatic, curricular approach to school counseling. The Alaska School Counselor Association identified the absence of programming and curricula targeted at student needs as hurdles Alaska school counselors must overcome. Additionally, strengthening curriculum and incorporating components targeted at supporting students in the transition from school to career were identified as strategies necessary to meet the goals of the framework. The development of a truly comprehensive school counseling program is daunting, but necessary. A critical piece in this process is the development of career components to incorporate into counseling programs.

It is worth noting that Alaska continues to rank low nationally in student success in school and continuing education beyond graduation. In 2012, Alaska's four-year cohort graduation rate for high school students was only 70% (Stetser & Stillwell, 2014). Only 63% of Alaskan students attend some college upon graduation from high school, and Alaskan students rank last nationally for the number of students who successfully complete a bachelor's degree within six years of beginning the program (Lee, 2012; Phipps, 2008). Only 27% of high school graduates complete a college degree within six years of graduating from high school (Lee, 2012). Approximately 43% of Alaskan high school graduates participate in some form of postsecondary training, including apprenticeship and job training programs (Lee, 2012). However, many of these students participate in these programs in conjunction with college courses (Lee, 2012). These statistics illustrate the need for career and college preparation for Alaskan students, and

better preparing Alaskan students for college and career has been identified as an intervention for this problem (Phipps, 2008).

Alaskan students may greatly benefit from access and exposure to career information relevant for the student's location and to the families of students, and this should begin during elementary school (Palladino, Palma, & Manzi, 2005; Phipps, 2008). Ultimately, a program committed to career or college preparation that begins in the kindergarten years and continuously supports students in career preparation through graduation and beyond may be a useful tool for ensuring student career development and future success (Phipps, 2008). Presenting college as an obtainable goal starting in elementary school increases the likelihood of Alaskan students believing in the possibility of postsecondary education and preparing for that education (Phipps, 2008). Introducing the concept of postsecondary education at a young age and teaching children about the effort and process necessary for attending college may increase the likelihood of students planning for education or training beyond high school and better prepare them for success.

The constant, rapid changes in the economy and the world of work require individuals entering the workforce to prepare for a career and be equipped for the changes that will be encountered throughout the entirety of the career (Gysbers, 2013). Ensuring student career readiness should be a goal of school counseling programs across the nation, and facilitating career readiness in students is a long-term process that begins during elementary school (Gysbers, 2013).

Purpose

The purpose of this research project is to determine what resources are available to school counselors in the State of Alaska and to provide guidance and support in developing program

components that facilitate career development and exploration, in accordance with the national and state standards. To fulfill this purpose, the following research question is examined: What curricular resources are available to elementary school counselors in the State of Alaska to supplement the career-focused component of their comprehensive counseling program for grades three through six, in fulfillment of the established state and national standards?

Literature Review

The successful implementation of career-centered standards in school counseling programs varies significantly from elementary to secondary grade levels. While career components to a counseling curriculum are integrated into most secondary school counseling programs, many elementary school counseling curricula fall short of meeting this requirement and developmental need (Dahir, Burnham, & Stone, 2009; Downing & D'Andrea, 1996; Wood & Kaszubowski, 2008). It is common for elementary school counseling programs to neglect the career criteria altogether in favor of curricula focused on social and personal needs of students (Dahir et al., 2009). This is concerning, as childhood is a critical time for the beginnings of career identity development (Porfeli & Lee, 2012). A child's career aspirations begin to develop at a young age, and become more established through the elementary school years (Porfeli et al., 2008). Childhood may be an opportune time for extensive career exploration, as the pressure to make a career decision and commitment is not yet a factor affecting students' career education. Children are capable of identifying interests and values, and using them to set career goals (Hartung, Porfeli, & Vondracek, 2005; Porfeli & Lee, 2012).

Career Theory

Grounding a counseling approach in a theoretical framework provides structure and organization to the approach (Fall, Holden, & Marquis, 2010). A theoretical foundation gives

meaning to the counseling experience as well as assists counselors in understanding the experiences of individuals they work with (Fall et al., 2010; Ryder, 2003). Counselors rely on theory to provide direction and a foundation for making decisions regarding the counseling process (Fall et al., 2010). Though many theories of career exist, two of the most widely accepted and applied theories are those of John Holland and Donald Super (Brown, 2012; Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006; Gottfredson & Johnstun, 2009; Weinrach, 1996). John Holland developed the Theory of Vocational Choice to describe the connection between an individual's personal qualities and satisfaction in career (Brown, 2012; Gottfredson & Johnstun, 2009). Donald Super, however, took a developmental theoretical perspective, and developed a theory to describe the stages of career development an individual progresses through (Brown, 2012; Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006; Gies, 1990; Weinrach, 1996). The use of these theoretical foundations is helpful in guiding the process of meeting students where they are developmentally and in identifying current needs in career exploration.

John Holland's Theory of Vocational Choice. Holland's theory offers insight as to why an individual selects an occupation and helps predict what careers might offer an individual satisfaction. According to Holland, individuals tend to select a career field that is compatible with their personality and individual characteristics (Brown, 2012; Gottfredson & Johnstun, 2009). Six different categories of personality and work environment have been identified by Holland, and these classifications are used to describe congruency between an individual and occupation of choice (Brown, 2012; Gottfredson & Johnstun, 2009). These categories are (a) realistic, (b) investigative, (c) artistic, (d) social, (e) enterprising, and (f) conventional work environments and personality types. These categories are classified based on the presence of specific characteristics and values in an individual or career environment (Gottfredson &

Johnstun, 2009). It is possible for a combination of these types to be present in an individual or career; often the qualities of up to three of these categories are present (Brown, 2012; Gottfredson & Johnstun, 2009). Career congruence, resulting in vocational success and satisfaction, results from the compatibility between personality and career type. When an individual selects an incongruent vocation, he or she is more likely to be dissatisfied and ultimately leave the career (Gottfredson & Johnstun, 2009).

Holland addressed the concept of career identity in his Theory of Vocational Choice. Holland believes career identity is constructed from an individual's career aspirations and preference of vocation (Gottfredson & Johnstun, 2009). An individual's perception of self also contributes to career identity. An individual with a strong career identity will clearly display the qualities and values belonging to a specific career category (Gottfredson & Johnstun, 2009). The same is true of career environments. A clearly established career identity results in more clearly differentiated personality, resulting in a good fit in one of the aforementioned categories. Similarly, an unclear categorization into the career personality types may be explained by an undifferentiated, ambiguous career identity, signifying the need for further career exploration and career identity development.

The development of career identity as explained by Holland is important to consider in the development of a career-focused curricular resource for counselors. According to his theory, knowledge and understanding of personal skills and interests are fundamental to selecting an occupation compatible with one's career identity (Brown, 2012; Gottfredson & Johnstun, 2009). Guiding students in the exploration of personal strengths and career preferences through a school counseling program may better prepare students for successful, enjoyable employment during

adult life, as congruence between career identity and employment is critical for satisfaction in work (Gottfredson & Johnstun, 2009).

Donald Super's Life-Span, Life Space Theory. Super's Life-Span, Life-Space Theory of career provides a developmental perspective that is widely relied on in the world of vocational education and counseling (Brown, 2012; Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006; Gies, 1990; Weinrach, 1996). Super viewed career development as a process, with individuals progressing through a series of stages as self-concept, interests, and abilities shift throughout the lifespan (Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006; Gies, 1990; Herr, 1997). Development is an active process, during which individuals seek and learn new information, develop skills, and make career-related decisions (Herr, 1997). Super believed an individual's self-concept was central to career development, and that a career choice compatible with self-concept is crucial (Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006; Gies, 1990). Super also believed the development of both self-concept and career identity are impacted and shaped by an individual's environment as well as the culture and values an individual identifies with (Brown, 2012; Gies, 1990; Weinrach, 1996).

The development of career identity in all individuals begins during childhood (Brown, 2012; Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006; Gies, 1990). As self-concept begins to develop, basic beliefs about work are formed and are influenced by the child's immediate exposure to the world of work, primarily through working adults. While immersed in this initial growth stage, children are likely to adhere to the traditional gender roles observed in their exposure to career thus far, and identify with jobs that fit within these stereotypes. Elementary-age students are likely to be in this stage of growth.

Children leave the initial growth stage and enter the stage of exploration as they begin to understand career is a part of their future, and begin to identify with specific careers (Brown, 2012; Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006; Gies, 1990). Students in their teenage years are likely to be in the stage of exploration. During this stage, individuals progress through the distinct phases of fantasy, tentative, and realistic exploration (Brown, 2012). Initially, during the fantasy exploration stage, children begin considering jobs that are likely unrealistic and unobtainable goals for future career. During the tentative stage, a variety of more realistic, potential career choices are identified for the future (Brown, 2012; Gies, 1990). Upon entering the realistic exploration stage, the individual has begun the process of narrowing down career options to career paths he or she is likely to pursue in the future (Brown, 2012; Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006; Gies, 1990).

Upon entering a career field and beginning work, an individual has progressed to the establishment stage of career identity development (Brown, 2012; Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006; Gies, 1990). During this time, an individual strives to find a good career fit, establish career stability, and establish a solid foundation for future advancement in his or her career of choice. After establishing a career, an individual begins working to maintain or improve his or her current position. In this stage of maintenance, individuals must often make decisions regarding career change or advancement (Brown, 2012; Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006; Gies, 1990). As an individual prepares for retirement, or the focus shifts to retaining a job rather than career advancement, he or she enters the stage of decline or disengagement (Brown, 2012; Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006; Gies, 1990). At this point, an individual's self-concept shifts from deriving value in work to finding meaning elsewhere (Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006).

According to Super's theory, elementary-aged students are in the growth stage of career development (Brown, 2012; Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006; Gies, 1990; Schultheiss et al., 2005). During this stage, children are immersed in the development of self-concept, which involves exploring and gaining an understanding of personal strengths and values (Brown, 2012; Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006; Gies, 1990). To meet the developmental needs of students, counselors can facilitate the exploration of personal strengths and values and how they relate to career. This development is greatly impacted by the direct exposure to career, primarily through close adults, and children at this point are highly impressionable by the common vocational stereotypes of society (Brown, 2012; Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006; Gies, 1990). Mindfulness of these factors is important in the development of a career-focused counseling curriculum, and an awareness of issues such as the adherence to vocational stereotypes can be directly intervened upon through a curriculum developed in consideration of this theoretical perspective.

ASCA Career Standards & Guidelines

In 2001, ASCA first developed their National Model to guide school counselors across the country in developing comprehensive counseling programs that consistently provide preventative, responsive, and developmental services to students, school staff, parents, and the community (ASCA, 2012). The Model clearly establishes minimum expectations in the foundation and delivery of direct and indirect services, and management of the program, as well as counselor accountability (ASCA, 2012). With the development of the ASCA Student Standards, ASCA (2012) has also delineated clear guidelines to address the academic, career, and social competencies and indicators students should be developing through a school counseling program.

According to these standards, a school counseling program should be assisting students in career development and preparation in a variety of ways. By recognizing career as an essential student competency, counselors can monitor the development of career identity and assist students in becoming successful and satisfied in their careers (ASCA, 2012). Each career standard builds on the last, resulting in a comprehensive foundation for the career component of a counseling program. ASCA Career Standard A states, “Students will acquire the skills to investigate the world of work in relation to knowledge of self and to make informed career decisions” (ASCA, 2015a, p. 1). In accordance with this standard, students should develop awareness of career and employment readiness through a school counseling program. A counseling program that meets this standard assists students in developing a strong career-related skillset, including learning to make decisions, plan, set goals, problem solve, and more. The program should also address practical skills, such as interpersonal relations, time management, and writing a resume.

ASCA Career Standard B states, “Students will employ strategies to achieve future career goals with success and satisfaction” (ASCA, 2015a, p. 1). To align with this standard, a counseling program should guide and support students in learning how to obtain career information and develop personal career goals. Part of this process includes identifying personal strengths, skills, and interests and applying these traits to career goals. Students should gain a better understanding of the various career fields, how to research and proactively increase knowledge around career, and understand traditional and nontraditional career options available to them. Ultimately, a student should be capable of successfully planning for future career, and develop the skills to acquire the information necessary to develop these plans.

The third and final career standard, Standard C, states, “Students will understand the relationship between personal qualities, education, training, and the world of work” (ASCA, 2015a, p. 1). To meet this standard, a school counseling program should support students in obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary for achieving established career goals. Students should understand the relationship between present education and future career success, the practical implications of career such as the influence of career on lifestyle, the importance of adaptability in the working world, and the need to be able to apply employment readiness skills. Ultimately, students should identify career interests, develop career goals, and should be guided in identifying career requirements and developing a plan to obtain that goal through a school counseling program. Each of these national standards highlights the importance of career exploration and the development of career identity through a counseling curriculum.

Additionally, ASCA has identified the specific attitudes, knowledge, and skills a student should gain from a school counseling program in the ASCA Mindsets & Behaviors for Student Success (ASCA, 2014). Each mindset or behavior falls into the academic, career, or social/personal domains of the competencies and standards established by ASCA. Student mindsets are the way a student thinks about himself or herself regarding academic work (ASCA, 2014). For example, an important part of student mindset is self-confidence in academic ability (ASCA, 2014). Student behaviors describe the behaviors necessary for student success, and include learning-directed behavior, such as thinking critically; self-directed behavior, such as self-control; and social behavior towards others, such as effective communication (ASCA, 2014). School counselors can use these mindsets and behaviors to evaluate student progress, determine student needs, and shape program lesson plans.

Career Counseling in Schools

The development of career identity is a lifelong process that best begins with career exploration, exposure, and education during childhood (Hartung, Porfeli, & Vondracek, 2005; Hartung, Porfeli, & Vondracek, 2008; Mekinda, 2012; Schultheiss et al., 2005). The degree to which elementary students are undergoing career development was explored in a qualitative study conducted by Schultheiss and colleagues (2005). The 49 participating students were in the fourth or fifth grade, and ranged in age from nine to twelve years old. Nineteen of the students were male and thirty were female, and over half of the participants were European American. The remaining study population consisted of Arab American, Native American, and Asian American ethnicities. Students were asked open-ended questions regarding their career goals, the influence of others on their career goals, and their perception of personal strengths and skills. The results of the study suggest that some children have already begun to formulate personal ideas on the importance of career based on the influence of important individuals in students' lives, that children of this age are actively engaging in career exploration and planning, and children are beginning to connect personal strengths and skills to future career (Schultheiss et al., 2005). This study illustrates the importance of guidance and education that facilitates career exploration to support children through this process (Schultheiss et al., 2005).

Children learn about career through experience as they begin to recognize interests, beliefs, and skills regarding the world of work during the childhood years (Gysbers, 2013; Hartung et al., 2008). The elementary school years are a crucial time for the preparation necessary for academic success in secondary school, which ultimately contributes to vocational success during adulthood (Trusty, 2005). For this reason, career exploration and development should be facilitated for students of all ages (Gysbers, 2013; Mekinda, 2012). Actively

integrating career exploration with younger students may serve as inspiration to begin setting goals and planning for future careers earlier, paving the way for successful and productive career development, awareness, and exploration during adolescence (Hartung et al., 2005; Mekinda, 2012).

Childhood is also an important time for the manifestation of career adaptability (Hartung et al., 2008). The skills necessary for reacting in an appropriate, productive way to both expected and unexpected changes begin to develop during childhood, and some of these adaptability skills are important for successfully working through and managing changes in the ever-evolving world of work (Hartung et al., 2008). Children can be equipped with coping strategies that are refined with future development and maturation.

The process of career maturation also begins during childhood (Hartung et al., 2008). Hartung and colleagues (2008) describe career maturation as the “development of an appropriate repertoire of planning and exploratory behaviors that promote effective career decision making” (p. 67). Part of this maturity is a cognitive readiness to begin thinking about career and making vocational choices and decisions. Career maturity evolves through an individual’s interaction with his or her environment, which is also an important piece of the overall career development of children (Brown, 2012; Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006; Gies, 1990; Hartung et al., 2008).

Career-ready students are resilient, possess quality interpersonal skills, are aware of career opportunities and how to pursue those opportunities, and are able to employ career knowledge and skills to lead themselves to success in the working world (Gysbers, 2013). The development of career readiness is supported through career counseling during elementary school (Gysbers, 2013). Counselors can work with students during childhood to develop social

competence, diversity skills, a strong work ethic, entrepreneurship skills, and an extensive understanding of their own personal skills, characteristics, and values (Gysbers, 2013). School counselors who approach career readiness are facilitating a conscious process that supports students in actively pursuing and engaging in career exploration, development, and planning (Gysbers, 2013). Elementary and secondary school counseling programs can prepare and empower students to seize career opportunities as they arise and instill all of these skills and qualities that enable students to adapt to the changes they will encounter.

Career counseling and exploration can assist elementary students in building the foundational skills necessary for connecting what is learned in school to future career options (Schultheiss et al., 2005). A study conducted by Kenny, Blustein, Haase, Jackson, and Perry (2006) examined the relationship between career development and engagement in urban schools in the Northeastern part of the United States. Participants were primarily African American, though Hispanic, White, and Asian populations were also represented in the group. The 416 ninth-grade students, ranging in age from 13 to 16 years old, participated in a thirty-hour career exploration program, and were administered a series of assessments to measure career expectations and planning, as well as engagement in school. A significant correlation between career exploration and student engagement was found (Kenny et al., 2006). Kenny and colleagues concluded that students who spend time exploring career before the ninth grade are more likely to experience positive feelings of engagement and belonging, value their schooling, and engage in greater career planning during high school.

Plank, DeLuca, and Estacion (2008) also found that career education and exploration helps students understand the connection between what is learned in school and how it relates to a future career. Understanding this relevance is important, as students who have the opportunity

to participate in vocational education are more likely to stay in school and refrain from dropping out during high school. In 2012, Alaska's four-year cohort graduation rate for high school students was only 70% (Stetser & Stillwell, 2014). Research (Haughey, 2009; Kenny et al., 2006; Plank et al., 2008) indicates that the opportunity to participate in career and technical education (CTE) might reduce the likelihood of a student dropping out of school and positively impact student engagement, making CTE a potential intervention to improve Alaska's overall graduation rate. Prior to the original passing of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998, research in this area yielded mixed results; some studies correlated CTE with higher dropout rates and others correlated CTE with reduced dropout rates (Plank et al., 2008). CTE now strives to provide students with vocational preparation while incorporating academic relevance, and is correlated positively with academic achievement, graduation success, improved transitioning from high school to postsecondary training or education, and increased yearly earnings later in life (Plank et al., 2008; Silverberg, Warner, Fong, & Goodwin, 2004).

Throughout a student's education, career education does not lose its importance: career education can be used to combat student disengagement during high school years (Haughey, 2009). Conversely, student engagement in school is an important contributor to both academic education and career development (Trusty, 2005). Addressing student engagement may be an excellent intervention to promote academic and career success. Palladino et al. (2005) found students who drop out of high school may have become disengaged from school as early as the third grade.

State of Alaska Career Standards & Guidelines

ASCA (2012) encourages counselors to give consideration to additional competencies identified as relevant at the state and district level for incorporation in a school counseling

program (ASCA, 2012). When appropriate and necessary, school counselors should incorporate these competencies and indicators into their programs. The Alaska School Counseling Framework has incorporated the guidelines provided by ASCA into a program created for Alaskan School Counselors, and the program includes additional standards to offer guidance to Alaskan school counselors (Alaska School Counselor Association, 2007).

The Alaska School Counseling Framework has also integrated the National Career Development Guidelines (NCDG) into the framework (Alaska School Counselor Association, 2007). These guidelines are similar to those established by ASCA, focusing on personal/social, educational, and career components. Under these guidelines, students are supported in career development and exploration in a variety of ways. Career development advancement is fostered through these guidelines, as well as engagement in learning that supports a student's ability to adapt as the ever-changing world of career evolves. Additionally, these guidelines support students in maintaining the academic performance necessary for reaching educational and career goals. In keeping with these guidelines, students should create and implement a career plan to assist in navigating present education and the transition to career. Shifts in career trends can be accounted for through plan flexibility. These guidelines support students in developing and excelling in career skills that will lead them to success beyond school, and understand how to seek out, interpret, and implement information regarding career.

In addition to the NCDG, the Alaska School Counseling Framework has also included the Alaska Employability Standards in their guidelines (Alaska School Counselor Association, 2007). These standards are intended to support students in successfully transitioning from school to career. Standard A states, "A student should be able to develop and be able to use employability skills in order to effectively make the transition from school to work and life-long

learning” (Alaska School Counselor Association, 2007, p. 36). A school counseling program meeting this standard will support students in developing (a) employability skills, (b) an appropriate work ethic, (c) an understanding of how to seek out and apply for work, and (d) the basics of employee rights and responsibilities. According to Standard B of the Alaska Career Employability Standards, “A student should be able to identify career interests and plan for career options” (Alaska School Counselor Association, 2007, p. 37). A student should gain an understanding of his or her interests, skills, and values. They should also know and be able to plan for the training and education necessary for potential future careers, as well as resources that can support them through that process.

Additionally, FNSBSD (2009) has provided school counselors with a Comprehensive Counseling Program to assist counselors in the development of counseling curriculum. This program covers much of the information provided for counselors by ASCA and the State of Alaska, but it takes the career component a step further by breaking career down into clusters by grade level for further exploration. Counselors can use these career clusters to organize the exploration process of counseling programs, and to ensure all grade levels are being exposed to the variety of career options available to them. According to FNSBSD, third grade students should focus on the career clusters of agricultural, food, and natural resources and transportation, distribution, and logistics. Fourth grade students should focus on the career clusters of business management and administration, hospitality and tourism, and science, technology, engineering and math. Fifth graders should focus on the career clusters of information technology, architecture and construction, and human services. Sixth graders should focus on the career clusters of arts, audio video technology, and communications, government and public administration, and finance.

Although guidelines have been established by ASCA and the State of Alaska, there is still a need for structured resources to assist Alaskan school counselors in providing effective career counseling for elementary students. Guidelines alone provide minimal support to counselors in the creation and implementation of a career-focused guidance curriculum. The lesson plans developed based on these standards provides additional support to counselors striving to meet the career needs of Alaskan students.

Cultural & Rural Considerations

In 2009, ASCA issued a position statement stressing the importance of school counselor cultural competence and sensitivity. School counselors strive to “create a school and community climate that embraces cultural diversity and helps to remove barriers that impede student success” (ASCA, 2009, p. 17). Personal culture has a significant influence on students, and counselors must be mindful, competent, and sensitive to the culture of every student. Understanding a student’s culture is also important for gaining insight in to his or her career development and perception of what careers are seen as obtainable. Cultural, ethnic, social economic, and gender-related influences can affect this perception, causing a student to self-limit when considering options for the future (ASCA, 2009). These limitations may stem from cultural influences regarding gender, social constructs, or how a cultural group values individualism versus collectivism (Perrone-McGovern, Wright, Howell, & Barnum, 2014; Wood & Kaszubowski, 2008). Girls, in particular, may perceive fewer career options based on gender and require additional support, guidance, or instruction to navigate this limitation (Hartung et al., 2005). School counselors should strive to navigate these phenomena with students in a culturally sensitive, appropriate manner. Counselors must remember a student’s culture can also be a great

source of confidence and empowerment, and school counselors should strive to foster this pride in students (ASCA, 2009).

The creation and delivery of culturally sensitive career components to a counseling program requires making the connection between culture and career (Young, Marshall, & Valach, 2007). Counselors should be cautioned that operating solely from a theoretical perspective, such as Holland's trait and factor theory, may not value culture for its full worth (Young et al., 2007). Thinking of culture only in the context of the individual may pull away from the value of the culture as a whole (Young et al., 2007). Rather than focusing solely on the characteristics of the individual, cultural context should be considered. Behavior directed at achieving specific career-oriented goals provides insight in to how cultural values have manifested for individuals within a cultural group (Young et al., 2007). Young and colleagues have described the relationship between culture and career as being intertwined, each feeding the other: "It is through career that one can engage more fully with culture, and it is culture that allows one to engage in career" (Young et al., 2007, p. 8). Familial and social cultural influences have a large influence on an individual's perceptions of career, as well as the goals he or she strives to achieve (Ott-Holland, Huang, Ryan, Elizondo, & Wadlington, 2013; Perrone-McGovern et al., 2014).

Alaskan School counselors serve a culturally diverse student population, whether working in rural or urban communities. Students in rural Alaska will benefit from career counseling that is informed by a culturally responsive curriculum. The State of Alaska has a large rural population, with approximately 34% of public school students in the State of Alaska residing and attending school in rural locations (State of Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, 2013). Career education is important in rural areas, though it may require a

heavy emphasis on exploration of career. Rural students are not always knowledgeable of the vast array of career opportunities available in the world of work (Seyfrit, Hamilton, Duncan, & Grimes, 1998; Wood & Kaszubowski, 2008). Students in rural areas may experience a lack of exposure to career, contributing to limited knowledge. A cultural barrier to postsecondary career identified by Phipps (2008) is the lack of knowledge and skills regarding the pursuit of postsecondary training and education. It is unlikely children will aspire to careers they are unfamiliar with due to a lack of exposure (Seyfrit et al., 1998). Children learn about the world of career through the different occupations they are directly exposed to by adults in their life, the media, and through their education (Gottfredson, 1996; Porfeli & Lee, 2012). To fully explore the variety of career options available, students must first be aware of career options, especially as children tend to seek out more information about a career that has piqued their interest (Gottfredson, 1996; Porfeli & Lee, 2012). Awareness and accurate understanding of career is of significant importance when it comes to future career planning and aspirations, as a student's understanding of career options greatly influences the variety of careers considered by a student (Schmitt-Wilson & Welsh, 2012). Vocational knowledge also influences the expectations a student has regarding future career. Because rural students may lack the exposure necessary for an awareness of certain career fields, additional efforts must be made to educate students on a variety of career choices, particularly those careers students may not be exposed to (Wood & Kaszubowski, 2008).

Counselors must keep in mind the career development of rural students may be different from the development of urban students (Schmitt-Wilson & Welsh, 2012). It is important to consider a child's environment when working to explore and develop career identity; some rural Alaskan students may desire to leave their village after high school, and some may desire to stay

(Porfeli & Lee, 2012; Seyfrit et al., 1998). It is important for counselors to give each career possibility consideration and attention, and educate students by facilitating the exploration of both options. In addition, the common approaches to career counseling may lead a counselor to work with rural students solely from a Western perspective, as the priority is often on personal preferences and characteristics when it comes to career choice, which may be incompatible with collective cultures (Arthur & Collins, 2011; Ott-Holland et al., 2013). It is critical to remember the career values a student holds are shaped by his or her culture (Arthur & Collins, 2011).

Additionally, level of acculturation to a more urban lifestyle must be considered. Traditional values in rural Alaska often center on a subsistence lifestyle, the continuation of cultural tradition, and family connection and respect (Seyfrit et al., 1998). Encouraging rural students to explore non-traditional career may be inappropriate when it means embracing more urban values and traditions over what is the expected norm for individuals in that community (Seyfrit et al., 1998). Students who desire to leave the community in pursuit of an urban career or education may be more accepting or prepared for urban acculturation. This can be a challenging topic for students in rural Alaska who are facing the reality of growing up in communities in the process of blending traditional culture with urban, modern values (Seyfrit et al., 1998). Further research on the influence of culture and career development is needed, but these issues should be carefully considered when working with diverse students (Ott-Holland et al., 2013). Increased resources for career curriculum development could help to ameliorate these challenges to career education in rural communities and assist counselors in constructing a well-rounded, thorough career counseling component to their program.

To ensure rural Alaskan culture is properly addressed by the guidance lessons in the application component of this project, the experience and insight of Matt Groen, a teacher

working in Russian Mission, Alaska, was utilized to develop culturally relevant lessons for rural Alaskan students. When using these lessons, counselors must remember that all Alaskan communities have a unique culture, and traditional practices and values may vary from village to village. In Russian Mission, school staff and community members unite to provide students with a rich cultural experience as a part of their education, providing the opportunity to learn the skills necessary to be successful in traditional careers in the community (personal communication, March 6, 2015). Mr. Groen works with other staff and community members to plan trips for students to go into the outdoors, sometimes for days at a time, to engage in traditional practices valued in the community. These activities include trapping, dog mushing, hunting, manqing and fishing, hiking, outdoor skill building, and berry picking. Such activities are common career options in this village, providing necessary or supplemental income to community members. The situation at Russian Mission is exceptional, with the school budget being specifically adjusted to allow for the obtainment of necessary supplies to support students in these outings. While this is not the situation in all Alaskan communities, the approach to teaching traditional practices in Russian Mission serves as a strong basis for the creation of career lessons focused on traditional values and practices.

Application

Though career theory suggests the development of career identity begins in childhood, and career guidance is required of school counseling program by both ASCA and the State of Alaska, a search of the literature reveals few resources exist to assist counselors in the development of career curriculum that implements the state and national career standards. The product of this project is a curricular resource for school counselors working with elementary students in grades three through six. The lessons are constructed to meet the expectations

established by ASCA and the State of Alaska, to ensure counseling programs utilizing this resource remain in alignment with the accepted standards. Additionally, lessons have been organized utilizing the lesson plan format provided by ASCA (2015b) to ensure lesson components and explanations meet the expectations of the organization, as well as to identify the specific standards each lesson strives to fulfill. These lesson plan components include a description of the activity and its process, the targeted grade levels, the standards the lesson fulfills, learning objectives, necessary materials, and plans for evaluation.

The lessons have been developed considering career identity, with the intention of building student awareness of personal interests, skills, and abilities, and exposing the students to the world of work, to meet the needs of students according to the career theory of John Holland. In the process of developing career identity, students must begin to identify and build upon personal qualities and strengths (Brown, 2012; Gottfredson & Johnstun, 2009). Students should also begin to plan for future career and identify vocational preferences in preparation for future career success (Brown, 2012; Gottfredson & Johnstun, 2009). These objectives are also supported by Donald Super's theory, as elementary students are immersed in the stage of growth (Brown, 2012; Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006; Gies, 1990). The development of self-concept, including personal skills, abilities, and values, are central to this stage of development (Brown, 2012; Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006; Gies, 1990). Further, students in this stage are highly influenced in their development through direct exposure to career, and are impressionable by vocational stereotypes (Brown, 2012; Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006; Gies, 1990). The lesson materials also address these developmental concerns.

When using these lesson plans, school counselors must remain cognizant of individual student needs, as the individual skills, interests, and personalities of students are highly variable,

but critical in career development (Gies, 1990). This may require school counselors to add to, remove from, or otherwise adjust lesson plans to better fit the student population being served.

ASCA requests that each guidance lesson plan include a plan for evaluating the lesson, describing how data will be collected. Process data focuses on the delivery of the activity itself (ASCA, 2012). Process data can be represented through the formation of a classroom guidance lesson schedule. This schedule provides a representation of the number of classes being served by each guidance lesson. Perception data must be collected to measure what students learn through the lessons (ASCA, 2012). Counselors can gauge students learning by utilizing written or verbal pre and posttests. Counselors can begin each lesson with a discussion to determine how much students know about the topic by asking questions specific to the material that will be presented and wrap up the lesson by asking these questions again to see how student responses have shifted or changed. Outcome data representing how the lessons have influenced students must also be collected (ASCA, 2012). The collection of outcome data may vary from school to school, based on community, culture, and school resources. Counselors may want to administer a pre and post unit test to determine how students are planning for future career, the mastery of developmentally appropriate career skills, or a heightened awareness of career opportunities, for example. After implementing the unit for a few years, counselors may even utilize a third grade entrance and sixth grade exit assessment to monitor the impact of the career unit on students.

Before collecting data, counselors should be careful to consider what approach will provide an accurate and culturally sensitive representation of the population being served. Counselors may need to adjust the following lessons to form a better fit with the student population being served. Counselors must be careful to assess lesson effectiveness and student learning based on the learning objectives and ASCA Standards the lesson is designed to fulfill.

Conclusion

This project provides a resource to elementary school counselors working with elementary-age students in grade three through six. Counselors are required to provide career guidance and counseling by the State of Alaska and ASCA (ASCA, 2012; Alaska School Counselor Association, 2007), yet few resources are available to counselors for the development of career-oriented program components. In addition to the expectations of these organizations, a developmental need is present for career guidance in children in these grades. The exploration of personal skills, qualities, and preferences are important to explore in relation to career during the stage of growth, as well as exposure to a variety of career to broaden a child's understanding of the world of work (Brown, 2012; Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006; Gies, 1990; Gottfredson & Johnstun, 2009). Career and vocational education is linked to many positive outcomes for students, including increased student engagement and academic success (Haughey, 2009; Kenny et al., 2006; Silverberg, Warner, Fong, & Goodwin, 2004). It is also correlated with greater ease in transitioning from high school to postsecondary training and education and a reduced likelihood of student dropout later in education (Palladino et al., 2005; Plank et al., 2008; Silverberg, Warner, Fong, & Goodwin, 2004; Trusty, 2005). Early career education has also been correlated with improved career readiness, adaptability, and maturity for students (Brown, 2012; Giannantonio & Hurley-Hanson, 2006; Gies, 1990; Gysbers, 2013; Hartung et al., 2008; Mekinda, 2012). Career exploration and education are important components of a comprehensive school counseling program, especially with elementary-aged students who are just beginning the journey of career identity development.

This curriculum is intended to support and guide school counselors in the creation and implementation of career guidance lessons for grades three through six. Because these lessons

have been developed within the established state and national standards, counselors can be confident these expectations are fulfilled through utilizing this curriculum. Additionally, counselors can be confident the career-related developmental needs of their students are being met through these lessons due to their foundation in career theory.

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Appendix A: Lesson Plans

Alaskan School Counseling: A Career
Guidance and Exploration Curriculum for
Third through Sixth Grade Students



By Sarah Bussa

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Exploring Career Clusters

The following lessons were developed to introduce students to various career clusters. To break the career clusters into more manageable groups, a breakdown by grade level by the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District was used as a guideline. These lessons will increase student familiarity with the variety of careers available. Counselors should be mindful of culture in these lessons, and discuss with students how these career clusters might look in their communities.

Lesson: Exploring 3rd Grade Career Clusters with “Paws in Jobland”**Grade(s):** 3rd grade**ASCA Student Standards** (Domain/Standard/Competencies):

C:A1.2: Learn about the variety of traditional and nontraditional occupations.

C:B1.4: Know the various ways in which occupations can be classified.

C:B1.5: Use research and information resources to obtain career information.

Learning Objective(s):

1. Students will understand and explore the variety of careers that fall into the career cluster of agriculture, food, and natural resources.
2. Students will understand and explore the variety of careers that fall into the career cluster of transportation, distribution, and logistics.

Materials: Laptop computer; projector; any necessary cords, adapters, or speakers. Go to site <http://paws.bridges.com/cfnc1.htm>, or search “Paws in Jobland”.

Procedure: Introduce the topic by discussing with students how important it is to begin exploring and thinking about career now, so they can find and plan for the job that is just right for them. Explain that part of picking a career path is learning about all of the different careers that exist. To make it easier to learn about career, all jobs are classified into different clusters based on similarities. Tell students they are going to spend time learning about some of the career clusters using an exploratory tool online. Using Paws as the guide, explore the career clusters of agriculture, food, and natural resources as well as transportation, distribution, and logistics. Next, progress through the different occupations to learn about what each job entails. This lesson may need to be divided into two lessons, depending on student questions, interest,

and discussions. Discussion questions: What jobs did you find most interesting? What did you learn about career? Which of these jobs do you see in our community?

This lesson was created based on the following resources:

Bridges Transitions (2011). *Paws in Jobland* [website]. Retrieved from <http://paws.bridges.com/cfnc1.htm>

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (2009). *Comprehensive counseling program* [document]. Retrieved from <http://www.k12northstar.org/departments/curriculum/counseling>.

Lesson: Exploring 4th Grade Career Clusters with “Paws in Jobland”**Grade(s):** 4th grade**ASCA Student Standards** (Domain/Standard/Competencies):

C:A1.2: Learn about the variety of traditional and nontraditional occupations.

C:B1.4: Know the various ways in which occupations can be classified.

C:B1.5: Use research and information resources to obtain career information.

Learning Objective(s):

1. Students will understand and explore the variety of careers that fall into the career cluster of business management and administration.
2. Students will understand and explore the variety of careers that fall into the career cluster of hospitality and tourism.
3. Students will understand and explore the variety of careers that fall into the career cluster of science, technology, engineering, and math.

Materials: Laptop computer; projector; any necessary cords, adapters, or speakers. Go to site <http://paws.bridges.com/cfnc1.htm>, or search “Paws in Jobland”.**Procedure:** Introduce the topic by discussing with students how important it is to begin exploring and thinking about career now, so they can find and plan for the job that is just right for them. Explain part of picking a career path is learning about all of the different careers that exist. To make it easier to learn about career, all jobs are classified into different clusters based on similarities. Tell students they are going to spend time learning about some of the career clusters using an exploratory tool online. Using Paws as the guide, explore the career clusters of business management and administration, hospitality and tourism, and science, technology, and math. Next, progress through the different occupations to learn about what each job entails. This

lesson may need to be divided into two lessons, depending on student questions, interest, and discussions. Discussion questions: What jobs did you find most interesting? What did you learn about career? Which of these jobs do you see in our community?

This lesson was created based on the following resources:

Bridges Transitions (2011). *Paws in Jobland* [website]. Retrieved from <http://paws.bridges.com/cfncl.htm>

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (2009). *Comprehensive counseling program* [document]. Retrieved from <http://www.k12northstar.org/departments/curriculum/counseling>.

Lesson: Exploring 5th Grade Career Clusters with “Paws in Jobland”**Grade(s):** 5th grade**ASCA Student Standards** (Domain/Standard/Competencies):

C:A1.2: Learn about the variety of traditional and nontraditional occupations.

C:B1.4: Know the various ways in which occupations can be classified.

C:B1.5: Use research and information resources to obtain career information.

Learning Objective(s):

1. Students will understand and explore the variety of careers that fall into the career cluster of information technology.
2. Students will understand and explore the variety of careers that fall into the career cluster of architecture and construction.
3. Students will understand and explore the variety of careers that fall into the career cluster of human services.

Materials: Laptop computer; projector; any necessary cords, adapters, or speakers. Go to site <http://paws.bridges.com/cfncl.htm>, or search “Paws in Jobland”.**Procedure:** Introduce the topic by discussing with students how important it is to begin exploring and thinking about career now, so they can find and plan for the job that is just right for them. Explain that part of picking a career path is learning about all of the different careers that exist. To make it easier to learn about career, all jobs are classified into different clusters based on similarities. Tell students they are going to spend time learning about some of the career clusters using an exploratory tool online. Using Paws as the guide, explore the career clusters of information technology, architecture and construction, and human services. Next, progress through the different occupations to learn about what each job entails. This lesson may

need to be divided into two lessons, depending on student questions, interest, and discussions.

Discussion questions: What jobs did you find most interesting? What did you learn about career?

Which of these jobs do you see in our community?

This lesson was created based on the following resources:

Bridges Transitions (2011). *Paws in Jobland* [website]. Retrieved from <http://paws.bridges.com/cfncl.htm>

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (2009). *Comprehensive counseling program* [document]. Retrieved from <http://www.k12northstar.org/departments/curriculum/counseling>.



Screenshot of Paws in Jobland homepage.
Retrieved from <http://paws.bridges.com/cfnc1.htm>

Lesson: Exploring 6th Grade Career Clusters using AKCIS**Grade(s):** 6th grade**ASCA Student Standards** (Domain/Standard/Competencies):

C:A1.2: Learn about the variety of traditional and nontraditional occupations.

C:B1.4: Know the various ways in which occupations can be classified.

C:B1.5: Use research and information resources to obtain career information.

C:B1.6: Learn to use the internet to access career planning information.

Learning Objective(s):

1. Students will understand and explore the variety of careers that fall into the career cluster of arts, audio video technology, and communications.
2. Students will understand and explore the variety of careers that fall into the career cluster of government and public administration.
3. Students will understand and explore the variety of careers that fall into the career cluster of finance.

Materials: Laptop computer; projector; any necessary cords, adapters, or speakers; take-home AKCIS instructions (attached). Log in to AKCIS in advance at <https://www.akcis.org/default.aspx>. Under occupations tab, click “Career Clusters”.

Procedure: Introduce the topic by discussing with students how important it is to begin exploring and thinking about career now, so they can find and plan for the job that is just right for them. Explain that part of picking a career path is learning about all of the different careers that exist. To make it easier to learn about career, all jobs are classified into different clusters based on similarities. Tell them we are going to spend time learning about some of the career clusters using an exploratory tool online. Click on each career cluster of arts, audio video

technology, and communications; government and public administration; and finance. Explore the different occupations to learn about what each job entails, reading descriptions aloud to students and watching the videos, when available. This lesson may need to be divided into two lessons, depending on student questions, interest, and discussions. Discussion questions: What jobs did you find most interesting? What did you learn about career? Which of these jobs do you see in our community?

If students are excited and want to keep exploring, provide the take-home instructions for AKCIS. Copy the handout and cut the copies into three separate notes for paper conservation and quick distribution. Remind students to always ask for parent permission before accessing the Internet.

This lesson was created based on the following resources:

Alaska Career Information System (2015). *Occupations & career clusters* [webpage]. Retrieved from <https://akcis.org/LandingPage.aspx?Tab=2>

Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (2009). *Comprehensive counseling program* [document]. Retrieved from <http://www.k12northstar.org/departments/curriculum/counseling>.

Ask a parent or guardian to help you log on to AKCIS! Follow these easy steps to explore the world of work.

1. Go to: www.akcis.org
2. Click "Log in with your Zip Code" on the right side of the screen. Look under "AKCIS Login" to find the link!
3. Select your city and type in your zip code (example: choose "Fairbanks" and type "99701").
4. Under the "Occupations" tab, look for "Career Clusters" and click the link.
5. Pick a career cluster, and start exploring!

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5. Pick a career cluster, and start exploring!

Oh, the Places You'll Go! and Planning to Get There

This lesson was created to inspire students to begin to set career goals. Students should also develop an understanding of the importance of establishing goals with this lesson.

Counselors should be mindful of culture with this lesson, understanding and appreciating the impact culture has on the goals students may set.

Lesson: *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* and Planning to Get There**Grade(s):** 3rd Grade**ASCA Student Standards** (Domain/Standard/Competencies):

C:A1.6: Learn how to set goals.

C:A1.7: Understand the importance of planning.

Learning Objective(s):

1. Students will begin considering career goals for the future.
2. Students will understand the importance of planning in goal achievement.

Materials: *Oh, The Places You'll Go!* by Dr. Seuss

Procedure: Introduce the lesson by talking about all of the possibilities the future holds. Discuss how students can choose from a variety of jobs they would like as a grown up. Introduce the idea that to accomplish a goal, one must have a plan. Ask students to think about what some of the jobs they might like to have someday are. Introduce *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* by Dr. Seuss, and read the story aloud to the class. Pause during points of the book that illustrate how one must plan, overcome difficulties, and work to achieve goals, and point this out to the students. End the lesson by reminding students that entering a career field requires planning and the ability to work hard. Ask students to reflect back on the jobs that came to mind earlier, and ask what the students might have to do in order to reach their goals.

This lesson was created based on the following resources:

Burstron, A. J. (2012). *JYJ counselor blog: Goal setting lesson* [blog]. Retrieved from

<http://jyjoynercounselor.blogspot.com/2012/04/goal-setting-lesson.html>

Hall, A. (2013). *Classy counselor: I'm in love with Dr. Seuss...* [blog]. Retrieved from <http://classycounselor.weebly.com/1/archives/07-2013/1.html>

Skills and Career

This lesson was developed to inspire students to begin thinking about their skills and interests and how they relate to career. An adapted version of this lesson is included as an example for counselors serving students in rural Alaska. Counselors can change the items to whatever may be most culturally appropriate: fish nets, fish wheels, or baskets/buckets and berries may be a more appropriate fit, depending on the traditions of the community.

Lesson: Skills and Career—Give us the scoop!**Grade(s):** 3rd Grade**ASCA Student Standards** (Domain/Standard/Competencies):

C:A1.3: Develop an awareness of personal abilities, skills, interests, and motivations.

C:B1.2: Identify personal skills, interests, and abilities and relate them to current career choice.

C:C1.3: Identify personal preferences and interests which influence career choice and success.

C:C2.1: Demonstrate how interests, abilities, and achievement relate to achieving personal, social, educational, and career goals.

Learning Objective(s):

1. Students will gain an understanding of the connection between personal skills and strengths and career satisfaction.
2. Students will become aware of personal skills and strengths.
3. Students will relate personal skills and strengths to potential future career.

Materials: Ice cream handouts (attached); crayons, colored pencils, or markers; scissors; glue

Procedure: Introduce the lesson with a discussion of personal qualities and strengths. Ask students to brainstorm some of the skills people may have. Then, transition to a discussion of how those qualities could make a person a good fit for a particular job. Discuss how important compatibility between personality, skills, and career are for career satisfaction and success. Ask students to list their own strengths on their ice cream cones. Then, students should list careers they might be good at based on their strengths on the scoops of ice cream. Their name should be written on the cherry. When finished, students may decorate their ice cream cones as they would like, cut out the pieces, and glue them together using their skills as the base, stacking the

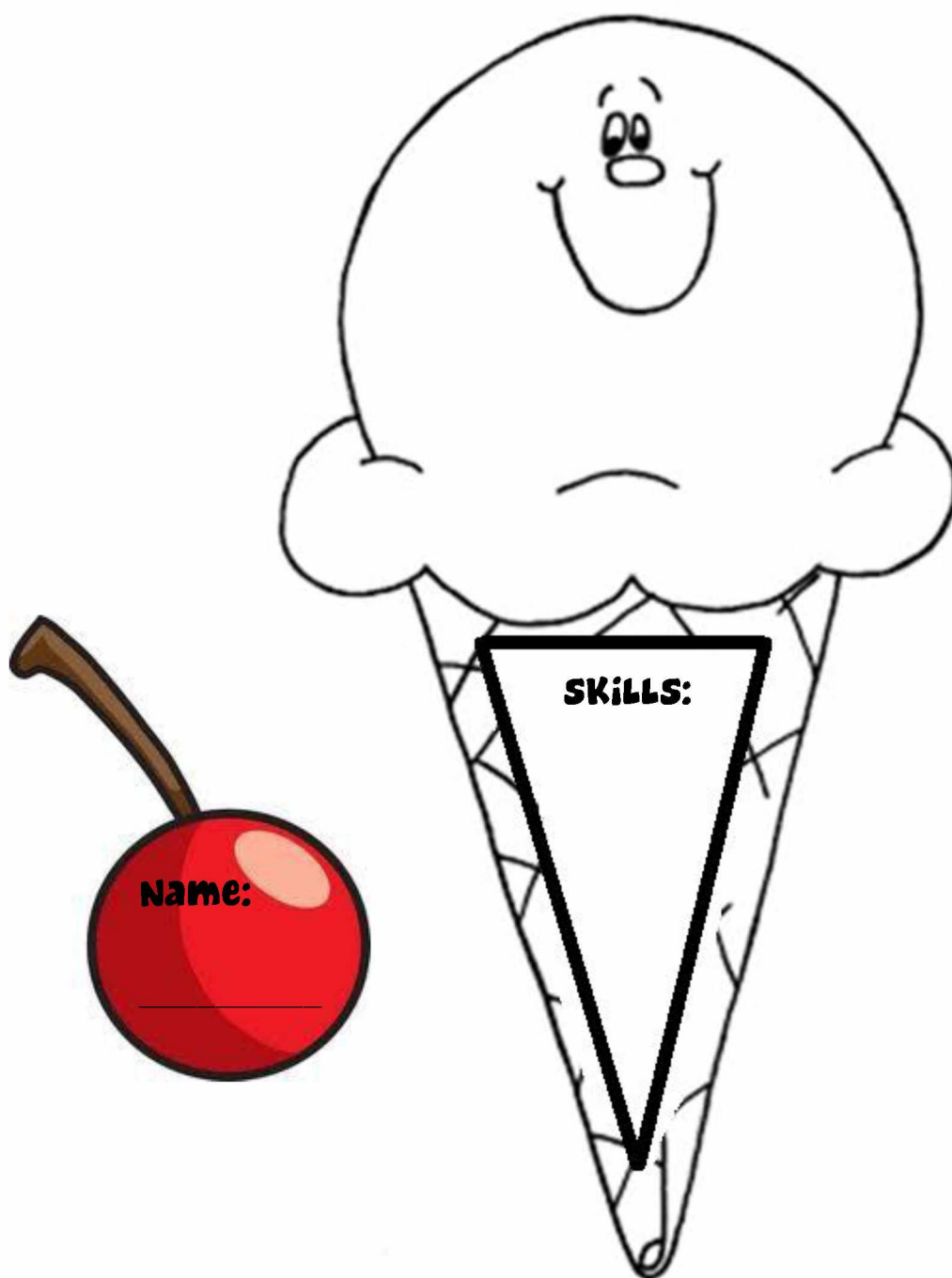
potential careers, and placing the cherry on top. Display the finished products in the school or classroom.

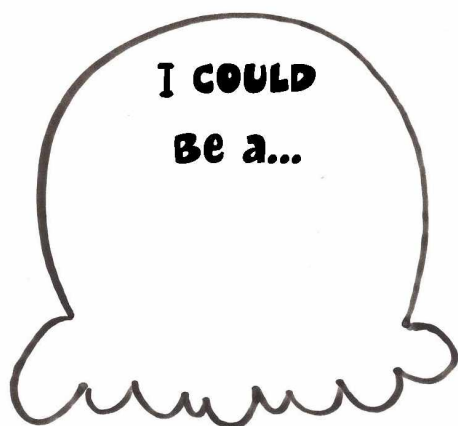
This lesson was created based on the following resource:

Rex, M. (2015). *Elementary school counseling: Ice cream career scoops* [blog]. Retrieved from <http://www.elementaryschoolcounseling.org/career-exploration.html>

Images retrieved from:

<http://www.elementaryschoolcounseling.org/career-exploration.html>





Lesson: Skills and Career—Setting the Net**Grade(s):** 3rd Grade**ASCA Student Standards** (Domain/Standard/Competencies):

C:A1.3: Develop an awareness of personal abilities, skills, interests, and motivations.

C:B1.2: Identify personal skills, interests, and abilities and relate them to current career choice.

C:C1.3: Identify personal preferences and interests which influence career choice and success.

C:C2.1: Demonstrate how interests, abilities, and achievement relate to achieving personal, social, educational, and career goals.

Learning Objective(s):

1. Students will gain an understanding of the connection between personal skills and strengths and career satisfaction.
2. Students will become aware of personal skills and strengths.
3. Students will relate personal skills and strengths to potential future career.

Materials: Salmon handouts (attached); crayons, colored pencils, or markers; scissors; glue

Procedure: Introduce the lesson with a discussion of personal strengths. Ask students to brainstorm some of the skills people may have. Then, transition to a discussion of how those qualities could make a person a good fit for a particular job. Discuss how important compatibility between personality, skills, and career are for career satisfaction and success. Ask students to write their names and list their own strengths on their nets. Then, students should list careers they might be good at based on their skills on the fish. When finished, students may decorate their fish as they would like, cutting out the pieces, and gluing them together using their net as the base. Display the finished products in the school or classroom.

This lesson was created based on the following resource:

Rex, M. (2015). *Elementary school counseling: Ice cream career scoops* [blog]. Retrieved from

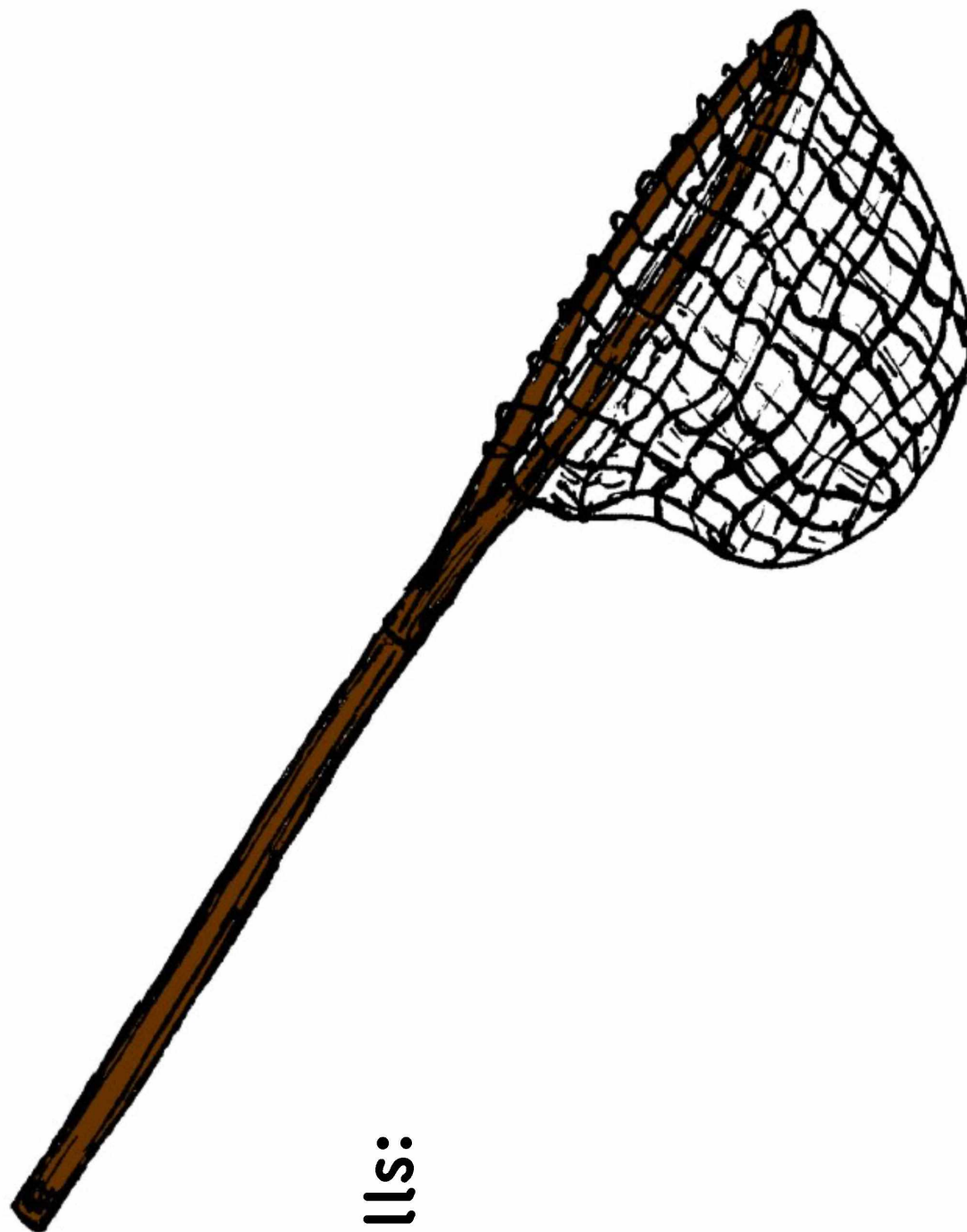
<http://www.elementaryschoolcounseling.org/career-exploration.html>

Images retrieved from:

<http://fashion-kid.net/fishing-net-coloring-page.html>

<http://images.clipartpanda.com/salmon-clipart-yToqoz4TE.jpeg>

Name: _____



Skills:



Roles in Our Community

This lesson was designed with students in rural Alaska in mind. It is intended to inspire students to think about what career may look like in their community, and what careers or roles in the community are open to them in the future. Counselors should keep cultural influence and traditional values in mind and remain culturally sensitive and cognizant at all times. The opportunity to have a discussion about jobs within the community in comparison to jobs outside of the community may also arise, depending on the population being served.

Lesson: Roles in Our Community**Grade(s):** 3rd grade**ASCA Student Standards** (Domain/Standard/Competencies):

C:A1.2: Learn about the variety of traditional and nontraditional occupations

Learning Objective(s):

1. Students will gain an awareness of the traditional and/or nontraditional jobs in their community.
2. Students will consider community roles and the skills necessary for success in those roles.

Materials: Paper plates; scissors; hole punch; string; markers or crayons

Procedure: Introduce lesson by telling students we are going to discuss all of the different jobs and roles in our community. Ask students to think about a grown up in the community who has a special role or job, without sharing aloud. Ask students to create this person on their paper plate as a mask. When students have finished, punch two holes in the plate and tie the string to complete the mask. Ask students to complete this activity quietly, without sharing their thoughts with their neighbors.

Ask for student volunteers to put on and share about the mask they created. Student sharers are to give two to three hints to their classmates as to who they are representing with their mask. After students have identified the individual, ask students, “Why is this job/role important in our community?” “What kind of responsibilities do they have?” “What special skills do they have? What are they really good at?” Conclude the lesson with a review of the different roles in the community. Did any other jobs or roles come to mind during the discussion? Remind students that it is important to start learning about community jobs and roles now, so they can begin to think about the future.

This lesson was created based on the following resource:

Public Schools of North Carolina State Board of Education, Department of Public Instruction

(2001). *Guidance curriculum for the comprehensive school counseling program*

[document]. Retrieved from <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/docs/curriculum/guidance/resources/programs-study.pdf>

Career Collage

This lesson was developed to inspire students to begin thinking about their skills and interests and how they relate to career. Students may want to save their collages as a reminder of their goals for future career, or counselors can display the finished products in the school to inspire other students to begin to think about career.

Lesson: My Career Collage

Grade(s): 4th grade students

ASCA Student Standards (Domain/Standard/Competencies):

C:A1.3: Develop an awareness of personal abilities, skills, interests, and motivations

C:C1.3: Identify personal preferences and interests which influence career choice and success

Learning Objective(s):

1. Students will recognize personal abilities, skills, and interests.
2. Students will connect personal abilities, skills, and interests to potential future career.

Materials: A variety of magazines, pamphlets, or booklets; construction paper; scissors; glue; markers

Procedure: Introduce the lesson by explaining that the activity for the day is going to help students learn a little more about themselves and help them to think about what kind of career they may like in the future. Knowing your interests, skills, and abilities can make choosing a career a lot easier, and working much more fun if you pick a job that matches your interests, skills, and abilities. Each student will be given a piece of construction paper and should write their name on the front of the paper. Divide the students into groups to share magazines. Ask students to flip through the magazines and cut out pictures or words that represent their skills, abilities, or interests. Ask students to glue these pictures onto their paper, but to leave some room. Allow students time to complete this task, and then ask them to look for more pictures that represent jobs and careers they think their skills, abilities, and interests would be a good fit for. Wrap up this activity with a discussion as a group. Ask for student volunteers to share the collage they created. (Note: Large classes or groups of students who love to share may require this lesson be split into two: one lesson spent on the activity itself, and one lesson spent on the

discussion and conclusion.) As each student shares his or her mural and connects their skills and interests to a career/s, ask the student to describe why those skills or interests make them a good fit for the particular career. Remind students that grownups who have found a job that integrates their interests and preferences are often happier and more successful in their work.

This lesson was created based on the following resource:

Public Schools of North Carolina State Board of Education, Department of Public Instruction

(2001). *Guidance curriculum for the comprehensive school counseling program*

[document]. Retrieved from <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/docs/curriculum/guidance/resources/programs-study.pdf>

Family Career Tree

This lesson was developed to introduce students to career patterns within their families. Learning about these patterns assists students in understanding the values, traditions, and expectations surrounding career within their family system. Students earliest and highly influential direct exposure to career comes from the family, and this activity can serve as a great catalyst for discussing career plans and expectations, and how they may relate to what has been observed or is culturally valued in the family.

Counselors should be mindful of cultural variation during the use of this lesson. Families may look many different ways to a student, and the less-structured family tree handout that allows students to add members wherever they would like can be utilized, should it be necessary. Counselors should be mindful of language used to ensure the instructions do not limit students in their self-expression in this activity.

Lesson: My Family Career Tree**Grade(s):** 5th grade**ASCA Student Standards** (Domain/Standard/Competencies):

C:A1.2: Learn about the variety of traditional and nontraditional occupations.

C:A1.3: Develop an awareness of personal abilities, skills, interests, and motivations.

Learning Objective(s):

1. Students will gain an awareness of career patterns within their family system.
2. Students will give consideration to the influence of familial and cultural patterns on vocational interests and motivations.
3. Students will give consideration to the traditional and non-traditional careers within their family system and culture and how this influences vocational interests and motivations.

Materials: Family tree handout (attached); letter to parents/guardians, optional (attached); pencils, pens, marker, etc.**Procedure:** Introduce students to the lesson by explaining the time will be spent thinking about how career looks in our families, and how that might influence us in our career goals and future career decisions.

Distribute the family career tree handout to students. Ask students to fill the space with the names of family members and their careers to the best of their abilities. Depending on the population being served, it may be important to remind students that family can look many different ways, and they can include whoever is special and influential to them on their tree. Student may decorate the tree to their liking when complete.

Point out to students the potential for career patterns within a family. Encourage students to express any thoughts or experience they may have on this topic. Questions for discussion may

include: “How might your future job look similar to the jobs your family has? How might it look different?” or, “Do you see a pattern in your family career tree?” or, “Do you feel it is important to continue a pattern in your family career tree? Why or why not?” or, “How might your family be an important influence in picking a career?” Ask for volunteers to share their career tree with the class and talk about how career looks in their family. Encourage students to have conversations with their families about career, planning for career, and their own personal thoughts and goals regarding career.

This lesson could potentially be divided over the course of two meetings with a class, which allows more time for the initial discussion of concepts, as well as time for students to take their family career tree home to complete in more detail with parents or guardians. If this approach is the best fit for your student population, please see the attached letter to parents for guidance in informing the families of your students on the activity and its purpose.

This lesson was created based on the following resource:

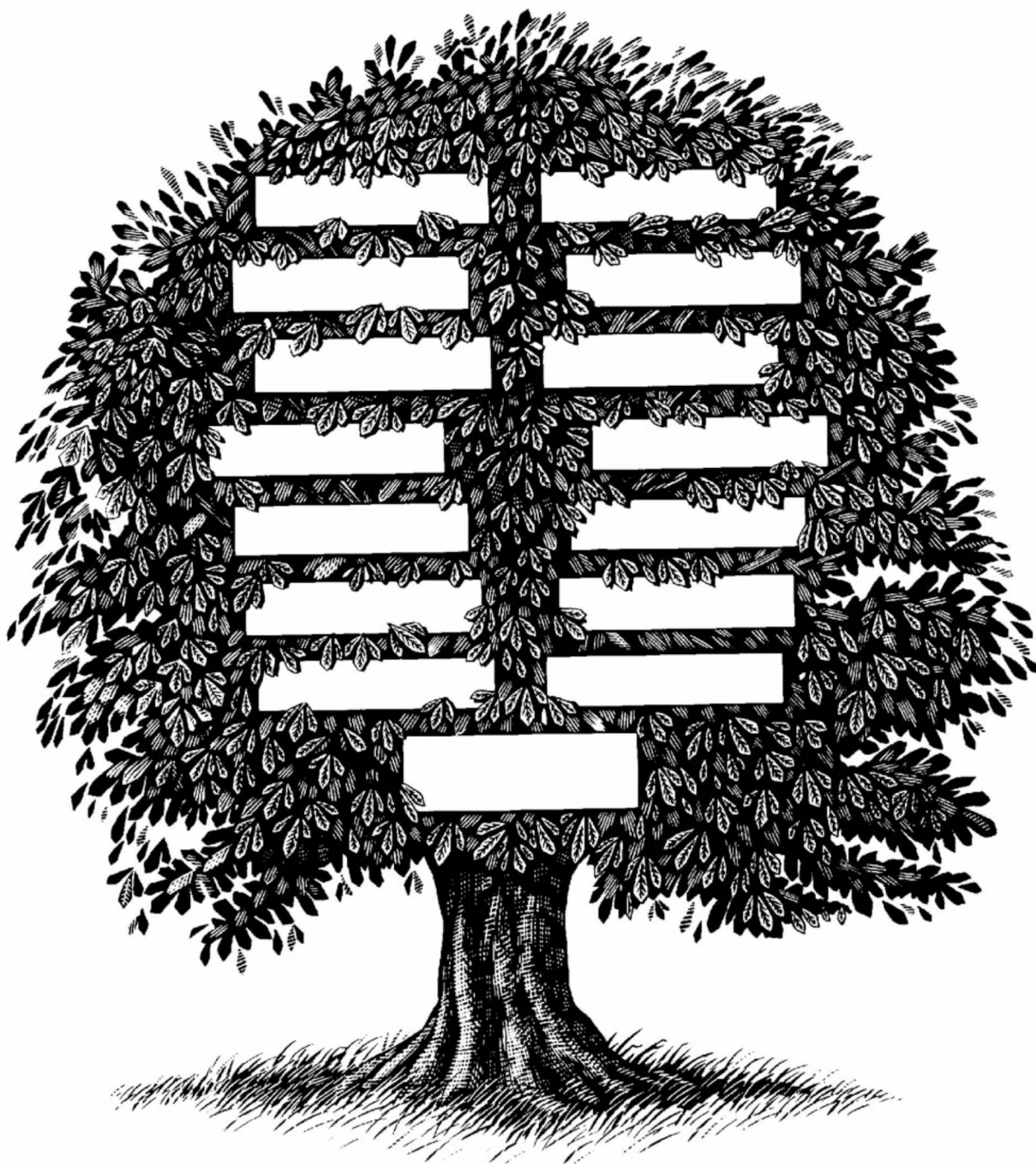
Gibson, D. M. (2005). The use of genograms in career counseling with elementary, middle, and high school students. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 53, 353-362.

Images retrieved from:

http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-S0NIcJqSuio/ToB2qzAQOfI/AAAAAAAAABzc/JCb5O1cSJ4E/s1600/family_tree1.jpg

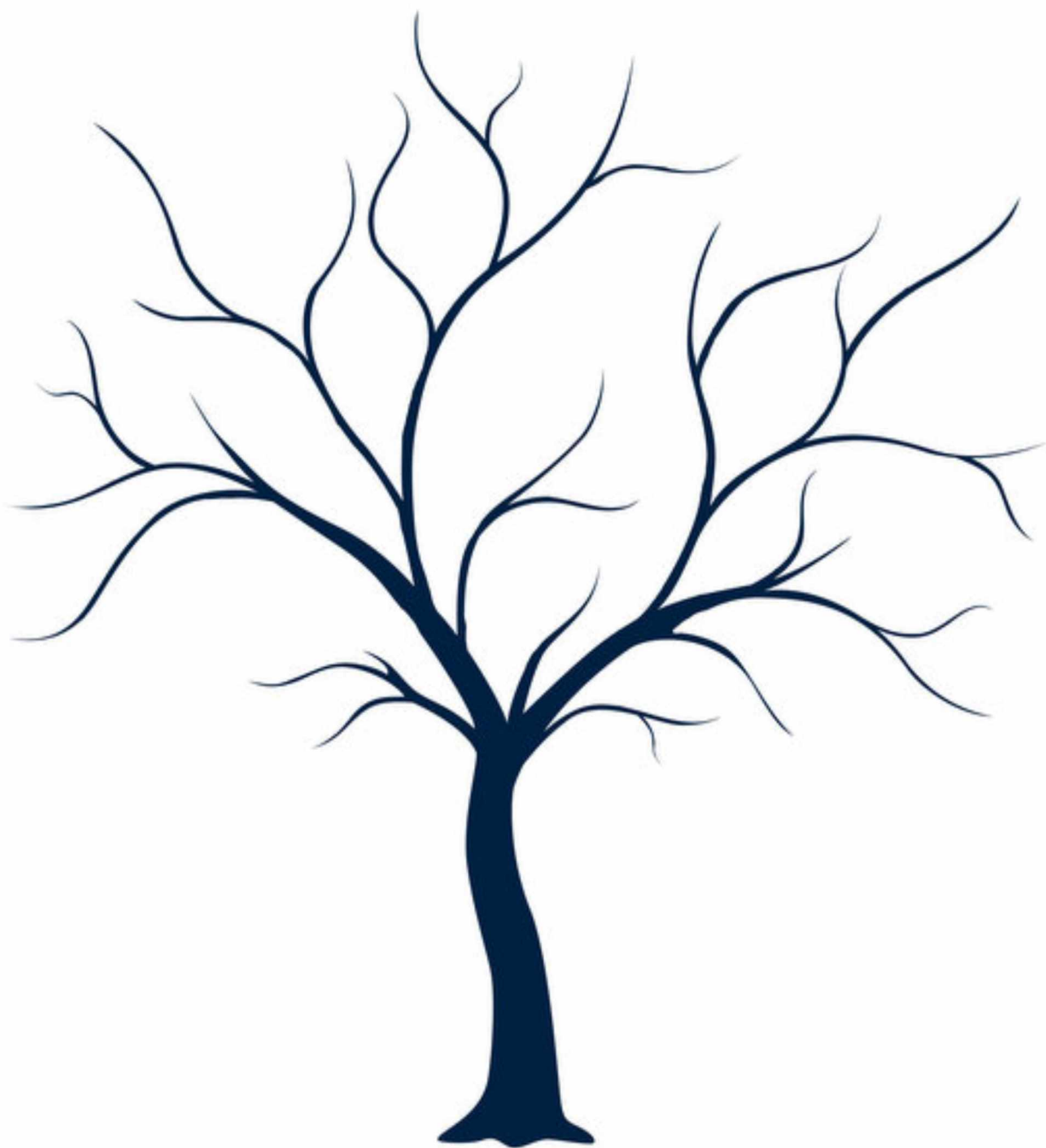
http://i743.photobucket.com/albums/xx73/likemomandapplepie/2014_Tutorials/DIY_FingerPrint_Tree_Guestbook___Fingerprint_Tree_Template_zps21cbb36f.jpg

My Family Career Tree



Name: _____

My Family Career Tree



Name: _____

Dear Parents/ Guardians,

My name is School Counselor, and I am your child's school counselor. I am looking forward to working with your child this year!

Over the next few weeks, we will be spending our time together learning about career. Career exploration can be very exciting! I hope our lessons will inspire your child to begin thinking about his or her future.

One of the activities we will be completing as a part of this unit is a Career Family Tree. Your son or daughter has brought home a handout for you to complete together. On May 9th, we will be taking the opportunity to share what we have learned about our Career Family Trees with each other during our lesson. Please take time to complete your child's Career Family Tree together before May 9th.

Please help your child write the name or relationship of a family member in the space provided, as well as his or her occupation. Please feel free to add additional leaves, or leave some unfilled. I also encourage you to fill in extra space around the tree with more important career information regarding your family!

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns about this activity or our counseling lessons. I can be reached at (123)456-7890, or via email at schoolcounselor@career counseling.com.

Sincerely,

Nontraditional Career Roles

This lesson was developed to help students understand gender stereotypes in relation to career. Elementary-aged students will often restrict or define a career based on gender, and working with them to understand gender does not limit potential career options is important as they begin to identify career goals. When necessary and/or appropriate for the population being served, counselors may want to incorporate a discussion of careers that are traditional and nontraditional in other ways, such as ethnicity stereotypes, or for the community in general, moving beyond the topic of gender roles.

Lesson: Nontraditional Career Roles—Gender, ethnicity, and stereotypes**Grade(s):** 4th grade**ASCA Student Standards (Domain/Standard/Competencies):**

C:A1.2: Learn about the variety of traditional and nontraditional occupations.

C:A2.5: Learn to respect individual uniqueness in the workplace.

C:B1.7 Describe traditional and nontraditional occupations and how these relate to career choice.

Learning Objective(s):

1. Students will identify and discuss nontraditional career roles.
2. Students will discuss and understand how traditional career stereotypes and expectations impact our expectations for others, as well as the career goals and decisions we make ourselves.

Materials: List of prior jobs for several well-known staff and faculty at the school (see below); Large list of staff/faculty and large list of various jobs (on poster board or portable whiteboards)

Procedure: This lesson requires work well in advance of the lesson. Interview a variety of school faculty and staff regarding the jobs they had prior to working in the school. Tell each individual you will be sharing the employment history with the fourth grade classes to begin a discussion of gender stereotypes and nontraditional work roles, and encourage them to share any nontraditional jobs they may have held in the past. Pictures of staff members can be taken, with their permission, to help the students identify staff members later.

Post the lists at the front of the class for the lesson. Inform students the goal is to match the jobs to the faculty or staff member who has worked the job. Students can work together and discuss, but when someone is ready to make an official guess, they must raise their hand and share their guess.

After students have completed the task, ask them if any of the pairings were surprising, and why. Often students will be surprised when staff members have worked in a nontraditional role, but there are a variety of discussions that could take place, such as progressing through a career or striving towards a career goal, but discussions of gender, ethnicity, and class are likely to come up. Point out that we often restrict ourselves and others in what we think they are capable of doing based on common stereotypes. Introduce the concept of generalization and stereotyping, and ask what students know about this topic. Ask students: “How would it feel to be told you can’t do something based on your gender/ethnicity/class?” or “How do these expectations based on how we look impact our career goals and decisions?” or “Do these stereotypes and expectations based on how we look impact how well we do our jobs?” or “What would some of the challenges of working in a nontraditional career be? Some of the positives?” Discuss thoughts and feelings around these topics.

If further discussion is needed, counselors can go into a discussion specific to the common gender stereotypes common in our society. Counselors can create two columns on the board, labeled “girls” and “boys.” The class can work together to brainstorm what qualities and characteristics we stereotype or expect from each gender. Ask students, “do the qualities in the boy column sometimes apply to girls, too?” and “How about the qualities in the girl column applying to boys?” Facilitate further discussion as suggested above.

This lesson was developed based on the following resources:

Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network, Inc. (2012). *Ready, set, respect!: GLSEN’s elementary toolkit*. Retrieved from <http://glsen.org/readysetrepect>

Reams, M. (n.d.). *Gender stereotypes*. Retrieved from <http://www.tolerance.org/exchange/gender-stereotyping>

Teaching Tolerance (n.d.). *Girls can be plumbers?* Retrieved from <http://www.tolerance.org/activity/girls-can-be-plumbers>

Assembling Skills for Effective Teamwork

This lesson was designed to help students develop and/or practice the skills necessary for working as a team, and to help students understand the importance of these skills. Counselors may adapt this lesson depending on the resources available or what may be culturally appropriate for the population being served. The assembly line can be used to accomplish a variety of tasks.

Lesson: Assembling Skills for Effective Teamwork**Grade(s):** 5th Grade**ASCA Student Standards** (Domain/Standard/Competencies):

C:A1.4: Learn how to interact and work cooperatively in teams

C:A2.1: Acquire employability skills such as working on a team, problem-solving, and organizational skills

C:A2.9: Utilize time and task-management skills

C:C2.3: Learn to work cooperatively with others as a team member.

Learning Objective(s):

1. Students will understand the benefits and challenges of working as a team.
2. Students will understand skills necessary for effective teamwork.

Materials: Construction paper; markers; etc.**Procedure:** Introduce the lesson by telling students the lesson today involves a craft project.

Break the students into groups of five. Explain to students that they will have to work together as a team to complete the project. Distribute the materials to each group and ask them to listen for directions before they begin. Each person in the group will have on specific job. Tasks can be added or adjusted as necessary, based on the needs or limits of the class. Each job must be completed before passing it on to the next student. The first student will fold the construction paper in half, right down the middle. The second student will write “THANK YOU” on the front of the card. The third student will draw three stars on the front of the card. The fourth student will draw a smiling face on the inside of the card. The last student’s job will be to evaluate the card for quality. If the card does not meet the standards, the card must be sent back to the beginning for reassembly. Set a time limit for the project, and make students aware of the time

they have to complete the cards. Announce when the time is up, and ask the students to come back together as a group for discussion. Ask students: “What made working as a team difficult? What made it easy?” “What were some of the benefits to working as a team on this project?” “What are some of the skills you need to work effectively as a team?” (examples: communication, cooperation, patience, time management, problem-solving, etc.) “When might having the ability to work as a team be an important skill to have in the future?” Remind students of how important it will be to work effectively with others as grownups. As an adult, your coworkers won’t always have the same opinions, ideas, communication style, or work ethic as you do, and the skill of being able to work well together anyway is really important to have. Student groups can sign their cards and give them to their teacher or other school staff after the project is complete.

The lesson was created based on the following resource:

Public Schools of North Carolina State Board of Education, Department of Public Instruction
(2001). *Guidance curriculum for the comprehensive school counseling program*
[document]. Retrieved from [http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/docs/curriculum/guidance/
resources/programs-study.pdf](http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/docs/curriculum/guidance/resources/programs-study.pdf)

Conflict Resolution

This lesson was developed to guide students in understanding the importance of conflict resolution skills and giving them time to practice those skills. Students should have an understanding of the differences between effective and ineffective approaches to conflict resolution after this lesson. Role play and discussion are important components of this lesson, and adjustments should be made as necessary to create an appropriate cultural fit with the student population being served.

Lesson: Conflict Resolution

Grade(s): 6th grade

ASCA Student Standards (Domain/Standard/Competencies):

C:A1.4: Learn how to interact and work cooperatively in teams.

C:A2.1: Acquire employability skills such as working on a team, problem-solving, and organizational skills.

C:C2.2: Learn how to use conflict management skills with peers and adults.

C:C2.3: Learn to work cooperatively with others as a team member.

Learning Objective(s):

1. Students will understand effective approaches to conflict resolution.
2. Students will develop and practice conflict resolution skills.
3. Students will differentiate between ineffective and effective strategies for conflict resolution.

Materials: Whiteboard or chalkboard; dry erase markers or chalk.

Procedure: Introduce the lesson by pointing out to students that conflicts will always happen; they are a common part of life. Ask: “Did you know there are different approaches to conflicts, and that depending on the approach you choose the conflict can be resolved, avoided, or even get worse?” Encourage students to share some times they have found themselves in a conflict, how they approached it, and what the outcome was. Remind students to leave others involved anonymous. Ask students to brainstorm some possible approaches to conflict resolution—positive or negative—and write them on the board. Some examples may include: compromising, apologizing, working as a team to find a solution, using humor to lighten the situation, listen to the other person’s perspective, avoiding the situation, accommodating the other individual, refusing to back down and compromise, or change your behavior by sharing, taking turns, or

waiting until a better time to resolve the issue. As a group, talk about some times each solution on the board may be helpful or hurtful to the situation. (For example, if two children want to play on the same swing during recess, taking turns could be a positive solution. Or, if the conflict is stemming from a student's feelings being hurt, humor might be a negative approach to conflict resolution.) What makes the solution positive, effective, or helpful? What makes the solution unproductive, ineffective, or hurtful?

Ask for two student volunteers to role play a conflict resolution situation. The students can come up with their own situation, or you can provide them with a common situation. Ask students to act out the conflict, and to portray a negative conflict resolution solution for the class. Then, ask the students to act out the same situation, but this time with a positive solution to the conflict. Repeat with different pairs of students as time allows, stopping after each role play to share thoughts and ideas as a class.

Wrap up the lesson with a summary and discussion. Points for discussion may include how students, at times, may have to work together with a peer they do not necessarily get along with. Sometimes they might not agree with the directions or requests of a teacher or adult. The same is true in the world of work—students won't always like every coworker or boss they have. Conflict resolution skills are important to practice, even as a kid, so that skillset is strong as a grown up.

This lesson was created based on the following resources:

Phillips, E. (2007). *Exploring alternatives to conflict* [document]. Retrieved from

<http://www.rischoolcounselor.org/ToolKit2.php>

Public Schools of North Carolina State Board of Education, Department of Public Instruction

(2001). *Guidance curriculum for the comprehensive school counseling program*

[document]. Retrieved from <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/docs/curriculum/guidance/resources/programs-study.pdf>

Sieverding, A. (2013). *Conflict Resolution* [document]. Retrieved from [https://sites.](https://sites.google.com/a/grinnell-k12.org/grinnell-middle-school-counselor-s-office/5th-grade-guidance/6th-grade-guidance)

[google.com/a/grinnell-k12.org/grinnell-middle-school-counselor-s-office/5th-grade-guidance/6th-grade-guidance](https://sites.google.com/a/grinnell-k12.org/grinnell-middle-school-counselor-s-office/5th-grade-guidance/6th-grade-guidance)

Nonverbal Employability Skills

Though communication is not specifically listed as an employability skill within the ASCA standard, technology and social media are changing the way students interact with others, making it crucial to remind students of how important nonverbal interpersonal skills are to develop and practice. This lesson focuses on building nonverbal communication skills critical to making a good first impression when meeting prospective employers in the interview setting and for working effectively with peers in the work setting.

Counselors should note this lesson may not be an appropriate choice in communities where the cultural norm for nonverbal communication is different than that of a “typical” urban community. For example, eye contact is perceived as disrespectful and can be very uncomfortable in some rural communities, and youth in some rural communities may or may not interact with technology as the youth of more urban communities. Be sensitive to cultural variations, and know the community being served before using this lesson plan. Counselors in urban communities should be mindful of cultural variation within the population they serve as well. Counselors may even want to incorporate this discussion into the lesson, when appropriate.

Lesson: Nonverbal Employability Skills for Good First Impressions**Grade(s):** 6th Grade**ASCA Student Standards** (Domain/Standard/Competencies):

C:A2.1: Acquire employability skills such as working on a team, problem-solving, and organizational skills.

Learning Objective(s):

1. Students will understand the differences between important interpersonal nonverbal skills versus the skills often used to interact with peers.
2. Students will understand the importance the employability skill of nonverbal communication to first impressions, interviews, and career success.
3. Students will practice implementing these skills, and understand continuing practice is necessary for skill refinement.

Materials: Cell phone, tablet, and/or laptop props for demonstration.

Procedure: Begin the lesson by asking students who have a cell phone, tablet, or computer at home they use to talk to others to raise their hands. Ask students to think about how often they use technology and social media to communicate in comparison with how much they communicate face to face. Ask for two student volunteers, and provide each with a technology prop. Ask them to demonstrate communication through their props. After the demonstration, collect the props, and ask the students to demonstrate communicating face-to-face. Ask the class to think about how different these two ways of communicating look and feel from each other, and ask students to identify some of those differences.

Transition into discussing how important the nonverbal interpersonal skills we miss out on when we communicate through technology are to career success. Ask students what a “first

impression” is, and discuss this concept, as well as how first impressions might be important to career. Point out that even though communication may be changing, nonverbal interpersonal skills are still important to learn and practice using.

Introduce eye contact, body language and open posture, and gestures such as shaking hands. Ask students why they think each might be important. Ask for student volunteers to demonstrate these skills. Then, break students into small groups or pairs and ask them to practice using these skills with each other. To conclude the lesson, remind students of first impressions by discussing job interviews. Ask students how a potential employer might feel and what they might think when they interview someone who does not use these skills. Remind students that these skills take practice to refine and perfect, and that students should take the opportunity to use these skills when they meet new people or interact with grown ups.

This lesson was created based on the following resource:

Hocker, S. (2014). *Improving students' employability skills through effective communication* [article]. Retrieved from http://www.ncda.org/aws/NCDA/pt/sd/news_article/98751/_PARENT/layout_details_cc/false

Exploring Traditional Career

This lesson was developed for use with students in rural Alaska. It is intended to encourage exploration of traditional work in the community, facilitating well-rounded career exploration and connecting students with the opportunity surrounding them. The idea for this lesson was developed based on correspondence with Matthew Groen (personal communication, March 6, 2015). Mr. Groen is a teacher currently working with students in Russian Mission, Alaska, and works with students to develop traditional skills, including trapping, hunting for a variety of game, fishing, berry picking, and so on. This skill development is an important part of the community's culture, and work in these fields is a viable source of income for students in the future.

Lesson: Exploring Traditional Career**Grade(s):** 5th and 6th Grade**ASCA Student Standards** (Domain/Standard/Competencies):

C:A1.2: Learn about the variety of traditional and nontraditional occupations.

C:A1.7: Understand the importance of planning.

C:B1.7: Describe traditional and nontraditional occupations and how these relate to career choice.

Learning Objective(s):

1. Students will identify and discuss the variety of traditional careers available within the community.
2. Students will identify and consider the training and skills necessary to be competent in the identified careers.
3. Students will identify potential traditional careers of interest, and give consideration to why they are drawn to those careers.

Materials: Whiteboard/chalkboard; dry-erase makers/chalk

Procedure: This lesson is discussion formatted. Open the discussion by informing students the topic for this lesson is traditional jobs within the community. Invite students to name the various jobs within the community, and list them on the board as students are able to name them. These jobs may vary depending on the traditions and subsistence practices of the community; some examples may include trapping, berry picking, hunting, dog mushing, etc. dependent upon the practices of the community.

After students have identified a variety of jobs, ask students to tackle each job one at a time, considering the different skills and qualities a person must possess to be successful in that field.

List these skills or qualities under each job on the board. Ask students to be specific, and to give consideration to both skills that must be learned and developed as well as personal characteristics and qualities that must be present for success.

After a thorough list of jobs along with important skills and qualities have been established by the group, ask students to select a job or two they might be interested in as a grown up. Stress the importance of considering the skills and qualities that go along with the jobs in making a selection. Ask: “What skills, training, or education do you need to be successful in this job?

What must you do to obtain that training?” Invite students to share, explain why they are interested in the specific job, and what they personally must accomplish to be successful in that field. Other points for discussion may include how these traditional occupations differ from other nontraditional occupations in the community, and, when appropriate, how blending the two might look and feel for each student as a grown up.

An expansion on this lesson can involve inviting elders, experts, and professionals from the community for each job to speak with the class. This provides students the opportunity to ask questions, and the speaker can share tips and provide guidance to the students.

Traditional Skills for a Rural Career

This lesson was developed specifically for use with rural Alaskan students, and is intended to assist students in building the traditional skills necessary for success in traditional work in rural Alaskan villages. The idea for this lesson was developed based on correspondence with Matthew Groen, as well as the specific career examples identified within (personal communication, March 6, 2015). Mr. Groen is a teacher currently working with students in Russian Mission, Alaska, and works with students to develop traditional skills, including trapping, hunting for a variety of game, fishing, berry picking, and so on. This skill development is an important part of the community's culture, and work in these fields is a viable source of income for students in the future (personal communication, March 6, 2015). It should be noted that this requires careful budgeting and preparation to ensure access to all necessary supplies for the outings and activities. Counselors can work to incorporate traditional work and activities of the community in their career exploration with students. This lesson is less structured than the lessons prior, as many of the specifics are dependent upon common jobs in a specific community and access to assistance from community members. Activities should always be adjusted to best fit the traditions of the community. These lessons will likely need to take place as a field trip, as the time and setting of a classroom lesson will not be adequate for a thorough cultural and educational experience.

Lesson: Traditional Skills for Rural Career

Grade(s): 5th and 6th Grade

ASCA Student Standards (Domain/Standard/Competencies):

C:A1.2: Learn about the variety of traditional and nontraditional occupations.

C:A1.4: Learn how to interact and work cooperatively in teams.

C:A1.8: Pursue and develop competency in areas of interest.

C:A1.9: Develop hobbies and vocational interests.

C:B1.7: Describe traditional and nontraditional occupations and how these relate to career choice.

Learning Objective(s):

1. Students will identify, explore, and develop a variety of skills central to success in traditional occupations in the community.

Materials: Any materials necessary to have an authentic and educational experience throughout the activity.

Procedure: The purpose of this lesson format is to increase student exposure to cultural work in the community, and assist students in developing and fine-tuning the skills necessary to be successful in that work. Traditional careers in the community may include work such as trapping, dog sledding, hunting, fishing, berry picking, other subsistence activities, and so on, depending on practices in the community. A counselor should consult with and invite an elder or expert in the community who is successful in the field to lead the activity and instruct students and the counselor in proper technique and approaches.

After identifying an activity and finding an individual skilled in the field, the counselor and expert should work closely together to plan and prepare for the activity. The counselor should

obtain all necessary supplies and parent/guardian permissions prior to beginning the activity with students. The expert can educate the counselor on necessary supplies and tools when needed.

Activities that will take place in the form of field trips will likely require parent/guardian permission before students can participate.

At the beginning of the activity, the counselor should introduce the lesson as an opportunity to learn about a potential future career for students. Counselors can encourage students to consider traditional opportunities for work in the community. Encourage students to work together throughout activities, encouraging teamwork and peer support. Students who already have training or practice in the area can help to guide their peers.

Students should be walked through processes step by step, with opportunities to practice and ask questions when possible. If necessary, the activity can be spread over multiple days to ensure thorough exposure and instruction. Activities that have many steps may require this process. For example, trapping would require more time to learn about the activity, as students may need to learn to build and set traps, have time to check the traps over several days, and learn about the process of cleaning animals and treating and preparing pelts.

At the activity's completion, the counselor should recap the experience with students. What did students learn about the activity? What did students learn about themselves? How many students would like to work in this field as grown ups? What skills would they need to continue to develop to be successful in that career?

Appendix B: Application References

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